CD 2012 -- 61/62

U of T Composer Concert
October 30th 2012

7:30pm Walter Hall
Edward Johnson Building

Featuring New Works by Living Composers

A message to all Cell Phone Users and this means most of you here: At the beginning of this programme you will be asked to turn your cell phones **OFF!!! This does NOT mean turn them on 'Silent' or 'Vibrate'. This means turn them *OFF!*** You may think texting during the concert is harmless but it is in fact a big problem. Why is this, do you say? Well, composers put a lot of work into a piece and at this stage of their careers, said piece may only be played once or twice. **Your cell phone sends a wireless signal that interferes with the recording equipment used in Walter Hall. This means that hiss, pops, clicks, and other undesirable noise can be present on a recording and this is as a result of** your cell phone. **In extreme cases, it can render a recording absolutely unusable. PLEASE, PLEASE,**

PLEASE

turn off your cell phones!!!!

Thank you. Paul, Michael, and Ke.

Biographies.

Felix Arifin is a fourth year undergraduate student at the University of Toronto, majoring in Music Theory and minoring in Composition. He has studied with esteemed Canadian composers Ka Nin Chan, Sasha Rapoport, and Gary Kulesha. He is a member of the elite choir at the faculty of music, MacMillan Singers. He is also an accomplished pianist, acting as rehearsal pianist for the aforementioned choir. In December of 2011 his composition entered for the Amadeus Choir choral composition contest won top honours, and received its first performance by the choir that same Christmas season. Felix is excited to hear his compositions performed by more performers throughout Canada and looks forward to premiering new works in the future.

Jay Caron is halfway through his Masters here at U of T. He is from Thunder Bay, but doesn't use it as an excuse for anything anymore. He's looking forward to a great year full of brass, opera, choral music, and of course, your piece being played at the composer concert (yes, you). Aside from music, he likes dogs, good meals (unrelated), the odd video game when he has time (May-August) and he once told his sister at Banjara near Christie Pits Park (fantastic Indian food, if you know of better, let him know) that his butter curry chicken was so good he could probably drink the curry with a straw. He also once t! ried to start a guerrilla art collective at his old campus, but not a single person seemed to take notice of the first piece, other than the staff who removed it, so he gave up.

Halifax, Nova Scotia native **Robert Drisdelle** arrived in Toronto September 2012 to begin his Graduate studies in Composition at U of T. Aside from his academic musical pursuits, Robert also works in video art, installation, has directed several music videos, and writes and records regularly in pop groups.

Keyan Emami holds a Master's degree in Music Composition from the University of Art in Tehran. His instrumental works include a wide variety in symphonic, chamber, solo pieces, as well as, music for theatre productions and theme music for film and television. In his music, Keyan often uses traditional Iranian themes and folk songs in a variety of structures and textures.
He has extensive work experience as an instructor of music in higher institutions. He has worked as a Music Instructor at the faculty of Music of the University of Art, the Azad University, the University of Applied Sciences and Technology and the Tehran Conservatory. His well-received Persian translation of Roy Bennett's book "Form and Design" was published in 2009.
After having immigrated to Canada, Keyan has continued in teaching music at Key Music Centre. He has also continued his work in composition under the guidance of Robert Rival, resident composer of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra. At present, he is pursuing his DMA studies in Composition under the supervision of Professor Alexander Rapoport at the University of Toronto.

Paolo Griffin is a Toronto-based composer finishing up his Bachelor's Degree at the University of Toronto. He has studied with Norbert Palej, Alexander Rapoport, and is currently studying under James Rolfe. He studies violin under Etsuko Kimura.
Paolo has had his works performed at various venues in and around Toronto and the United States.

Tze Yeung Ho, a Norwegian-Chinese composer, was born in 1992, Oslo, Norway. He currently resides in Toronto, Canada and studies composition at the University of Toronto. Three years prior to his studies at the university, he had private composition instructions from the well-established Canadian composer, Dr. Alexander 'Sasha' Weinstangel. Tze Yeung has also worked with other Canadian composers such as Maria Molinari and Andrew Staniland in various composition workshops held in the Canadian Music Centre. As well, Tze Yeung held a position as assistant copyist in Eighth Note Publications in Markham, Canada. He currently studies composition under Gary Kulesha.

My name is **Rizgar Ismael**. I am a 3rd year composition major student currently studying with Prof. CHristos Hatzis. I have also studied with Prof. Alexander Rapoport, Prof. John Kruspe and Prof. Chan Ka nin.

Patrick McGraw was born in the U.S. and immigrated to Canada in 2001. He earned a Ph.D. in theoretical physics from Caltech in 1996 but subsequently began to shift his primary focus toward music. Currently studying composition with Gary Kulesha, he has also studied with Alexander Rapoport and David Mott. As a saxophonist and clarinettist, he is especially at home when writing for wind instruments.

Jordan O'Connor is a 4th year composition major who studies with Sasha. Rizgar is Jordan's manager.

Tyler Versluis grew up in St. Catharines Ontario, and took his first music lessons from his grandfather, a church organist. He studied oboe, organ, collaborative piano and composition at Brock University, graduating in 2012 with the Ronald Tremain Prize in Music Composition. His graduation work, "Meditations Around the Cross" was a work for string quartet and baritone, and was premiered by the St. Catharines Chamber Music Society. Tyler is currently completing his Master of Music degree in composition at University of Toronto, studying with Norbert Palej. His past composition teachers have included Matthew Therrien, Abigail Richardson and Peter Landey.

Kenzie Yango (b. 1992) is a second year Comprehensive Voice Major. This piece will mark his debut in the UofT composers concert. His musical inspirations come from a variety of composers such as Nobuo Uematsu, Franz Schubert, Jean Sibelius, Alfred Schnittke, and Han Zimmer. His future endeavours involve writing music for a variety of media driven companies; for video games, film, or television.

CD I

Programme

1

Tides of Night

Kenzie Yango b. 1992

Maika'i Nash, Piano

2

"...as I do" for flute and piano

Jordan O'Connor

Robin Meiksins, flute

Samuel "Sammy' Bayefsky, Piano

3

Five Homages for clarinet, saxophone and piano

i. Prelude

ii. Lonely Birds

iii. Canusa Street (We Stand On Guard)

iv. Eine Kleine Gebrauchsmusik

v. Finale: Quasi Marcia

Patrick McGraw b. 1968

Christa Lock, clarinet

Jeffrey Leung, saxophones

Wesley Shen, piano

4

May March in April *For Jason Dallas*

Felix Arifin b.1991

Jason Dallas, Euphonium

5

Invocation

Tyler Versluis

Alexandra Smither, soprano

Wesley Shen, piano

6

Middle Eastern Cuisine

1- Hummus (Maqam Hijaz)

2- Falafel (Maqam Kurd or Phrygian)

3- Baba Ghanoush (Maqam Saba Zamzam)

4- Biryani (Maqam Ajam or Ionian)

5- Baklava (Maqam Shawq Afza)

Rizgar Ismael (b.1977)

Wesley Shen, Harpsichord

CD II

~*Intermission*~

1

Jook Eul Eh? (죽을 래?)

Jason Caron b. 1989

Becci Lim, Viola
Zhenya Yesmanovich Piano

2

Neural Pathways

Paolo Griffin

Colin Repas, Violin I
Sebastian Sallens, Violin II
Chris Arnold, Viola
Rosy Zhang, Cello

3

Trio - "Prayer"

Tze Yeung Ho b. 1992

Ruth-Anne Yiu, Violin
Dayoung Seo, Cello
David Debono, Piano

4

Five Pieces for Piano

1. In Search of Elusive Memories
2. Lost
3. Desperate in Darkness
4. Ecstatic
5. Ascention

Keyan Emami b.1980

Saman Shahi, Piano

5

***Snunch Fur Lunch*,**
for piano and any number of melodic instruments

Robert Drisdelle (b. 1987)

Saman Shahi, Piano
Brian Jiang, Flute
Mike Dassios, Clarinet

Programme Notes:

This work, **"...as I do"** for piano and flute, was inspired by my reading of Hamlet (the first four acts – don't spoil the ending!) Referencing Shakespeare rings uneasy to me as there is practice amongst composers, in an effort to heighten the merits of their own work lean on the literary greats, like Shakespeare, but I digress.
What struck me about the play – Hamlet – was the conflict created by Hamlet with... well, everyone! In between madness and transcendence, he pushed the buttons of every character. On its own this is not interesting, however what struck me was how invested I was in him, rooting for him, I crying out to the pages: Love Ophelia! But no, he destroys her. In fact he destroys everything under the guise of honoring his father, even accidently killing (spoiler alert) Polonius. This exposed my idealism, challenged my romanticism and any notion of heroics I may have had –

"What should such fellows *as I do*, crawling between earth and heaven?"

Act 3, Scene 1.

This line resonated with me, not because of the play but because I am just as in between as Hamlet, questions of my nature, my place in the world, personal value, and so on, all confound me and can lead to hopelessness. This piece, for flute and piano, reflects the contradictions of my own fragmented thoughts on love, on hate, hope and so on. But who knows, all this may change when I read the final act – but I doubt it.

Five Homages is a suite of five short pieces, inspired by five twentieth-century composers and featuring the performers in different combinations. In one brief minute, the piano Prelude recapitulates some of the evolution of Scriabin's harmonic language. In the Messiaen-inspired Lonely Birds, the soprano saxophone and clarinet are like two birds which eventually join their voices in harmony along with the piano. Canusa Street celebrates an oddity of the U.S.-Canadian border: allegedly the work of inebriated surveyors, the town of Beebe Plain is bisected by the Vermont/Quebec frontier, which runs along Canusa St. (Rue Canusa) for several blocks and cuts through several buildings. The music is an Ivesian collage of Canadian and American tunes for clarinet and piano. Eine Kleine Gebrauchsmusik, in honour of Hindemith, is a highly compressed sonata movement for alto saxophone and piano. The full trio reunites in the Persichetti-inspired Finale for tenor saxophone, clarinet and piano.

Five Pieces for Piano is inspired by the extreme emotional distress that Keyan's family suffered when they realized his father had dementia.
1. In Search of Elusive Memories: is derived largely from his memories of childhood – the song his father played to him by the violin.
2. Lost: evokes deep sadness and confusion after his father's illness.
3. Desperate in Darkness: is a journey to the depth of darkness, terror, disappointment, and emptiness.
4. Ecstatic: portrays the happy and joyful days when his father was still healthy.
5. Ascension: is a recurrence of the theme of first piece in a tranquil atmosphere.
The piece received its world premiere and three more performances in Ontario and Quebec in 2011 and 2012 through a concert series held by the Iranian composers of Toronto and Saman was the pianist for all The 4 concerts.

"Invocation" is one of several works that I have written that were inspired by the North American hymn tradition of Sacred Harp. I used portions of the hymn text written by Robert Seagrave (1693-1742) as well as part of the original anonymously-written tune. Sacred Harp originally arose as a reaction against Puritan worship traditions, which dictated that worship would consist only of unaccompanied monophonic Psalms. Sacred Harp composers also protested against the "correct" and European school of hymn writing, led by composers like Lowell Mason. Sacred Harp is recognizable by its almost quintal approach to harmony and the pentatonic scales frequently utilized in its voice parts. Like many Sacred Harp texts, "Invocation" describes the brevity of earthly life and the longing

for sacred reconciliation.

Jook eul eh (죽을 래) is a colloquial Korean threat meaning "you wanna die?" Basically, don't mess with this piece.

May March in April is a piece that helped me realize the dynamic and emotional content found in the euphonium, the brass family's newest member. It is bright, sweet, and full of energy; complementary to the cheerful and warm tones found in the instrument. Many thanks are given to my performer friend Jason Dallas for giving me the opportunity to write a piece that suited his talents.

Middle Eastern Cuisine . Thanks to my good friend Jordan O'Connor (www.jordanoconnor.com) who suggested that I write short Harpsichord pieces utilizing Middle Eastern modes since the sound of the Harpsichord resembles the Persian Santoor. Middle Eastern Cuisine is a five movement Harpsichord suite that is based on Middle Eastern Modes (Maqamat). Each movement represents a Middle Eastern dish starting with appetizers , main dish and finally the dessert. The work has a contrapuntal texture and was influenced by Bach's Two-Part inventions. I would like to thank Prof. John Kruspe for his invaluable suggestions.

A neural pathway, neural tract, or neural face, connects one part of the nervous system with another.
They usually consist of bundles of elongated, myelin-insulated neurons, known collectively as white matter. Neural pathways serve to connect relatively distant areas of the brain or nervous system, compared to the local communication of grey matter.
Thus was my image of the brain. A stark, open space where electricity courses through these tracts.
Electricity is a powerful stimulus.

Prayer is based on two main motives appearing in the opening section. The tender adagio opening is contrasted by a macabre allegro section. The fast section, however, is not to mar the tranquility of a prayer. It is merely an alternative way to express the spiritual energy that is put into a daily prayer. As well, this piece is not affiliated with any specific beliefs. It expresses the devotion needed for a prayer.

Snunch Fur Lunch means to be a bit of a throwback to 60s film soundtracks and easy listening records, when both of those forms were at the time of their crystallization still relatively new and even experimental. Inspired especially by Bacharach and Morricone, it employs a melody line played in unison by a number of instruments with chordal piano accompaniment.

Tides of Night represents an unwanted transformation and the struggle to remain unchanged. Written in a nocturne-esque style, this piece evokes both vivid imagery connected to somber emotions. It begins with a lengthy section of a very dream-like sequence and is followed by a hugely dramatic change dynamically and chromatically. This marks the beginning of many changes in time and rhythm, allowing for the quick movement through sections, avoiding climactic moments which would end the struggle completely. In conclusion, Tides of Night comes full circle, and ends right where it begins, and in a way, where its been all along... on a series of 6ths.

We, the Composition Students, would like to extend a special thanks to the following -our teachers and mentors- for all their hard work in making this event possible. In no particular order.

Professors Mark Sallmen, Christos Hatzis, Alexander 'Sasha' Rapport, Chan Ka Nin, Gary Kulesha, Ryan McClelland, Dennis Patrick, Norbert Palej, and Roger Bergs, Larysa Kuzmenko, Abigail Richardson, Eric Robertson, James Rolfe.

We would also like to thank Peter Olsen for recording our music and making it sound beautiful.

Fin.